

10 TRACKS
tabbed including:

'Parallel Universe'

'Last Train Home'

'Sunshine Of Your Love'

Complete track
list on the CD

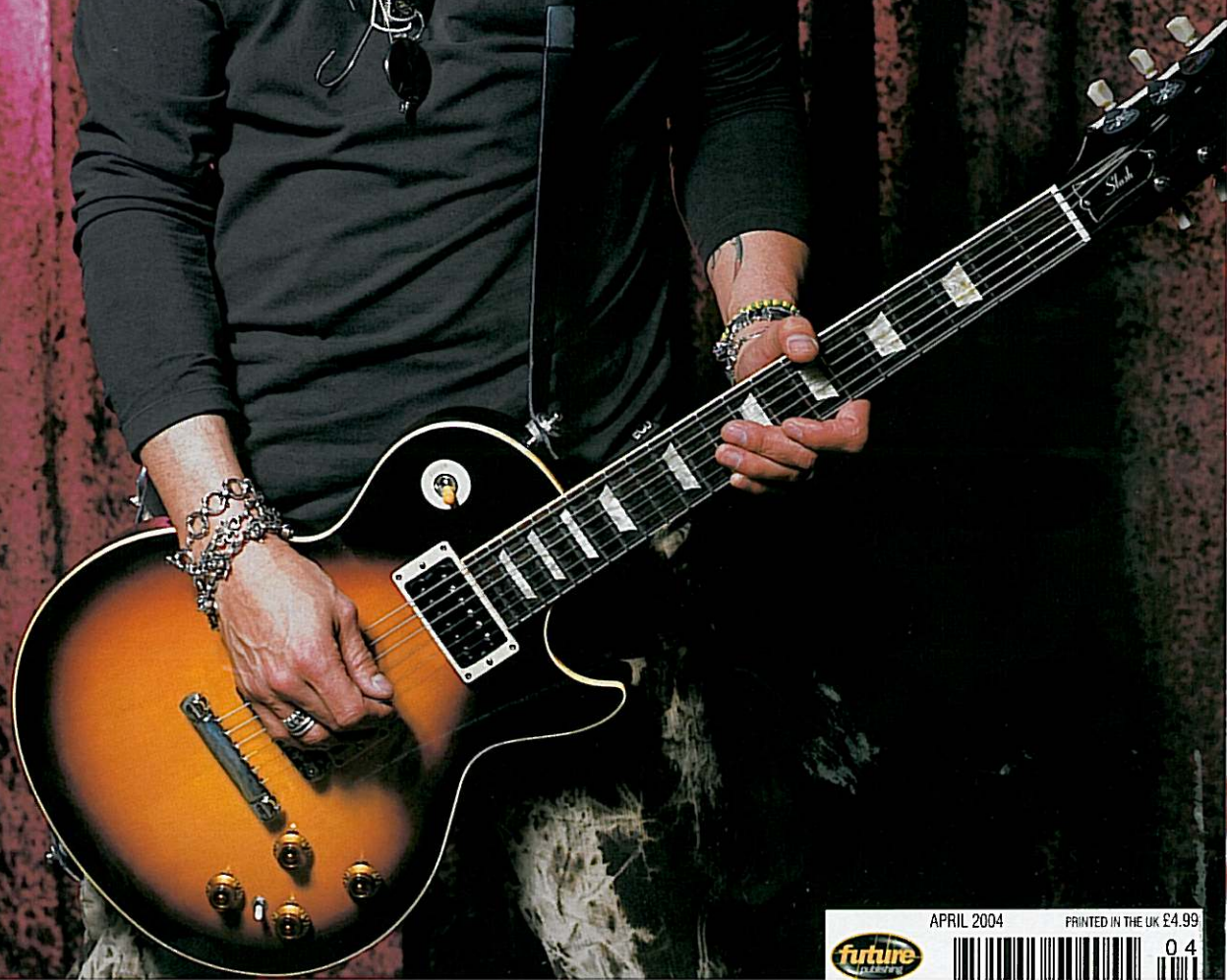
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Velvet Revolver



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future
MUSIC





Pure Velvet: "This is the first time I've really felt part of a band"

Velvet Revolver

THE EAGERLY ANTICIPATED RELEASE OF VELVET REVOLVER'S DEBUT ALBUM IS FINALLY UPON US. AFTER MONTHS OF DELAYS, SCANDAL AND REHAB, THE 'ULTIMATE' ROCK SUPER GROUP ARE READY TO FACE THE WORLD. AND THEY HAVE A LOT OF EXPLAINING TO DO...

WORDS: STEVEN ROSEN PICTURES: JOHN McMURTRIE

Finally, after all the hoopla, drama, relapses, and false starts, in a rehearsal studio on the outskirts of L.A., four-fifths of the band known as Velvet Revolver – Slash and former Guns N' Roses bandmates Duff McKagan and Matt Sorum, and relatively unknown guitarist Dave Kushner – enjoy a rare moment of calm before the storm.

Many people (one Mr A Rose among them) will be amazed they got this far. A band of former alcoholics and drug addicts fronted by troubled former Stone Temple Pilot vocalist Scott Weiland, things haven't run smoothly. Charged with possession of heroin, domestic violence and drink driving, Weiland's been confined to rehab for months now, delaying the release of the album. (Not that the rest of the band haven't been very supportive – they've all been there at some point.) Which makes the finished product, *Contraband*, all the more amazing and triumphant.

Set for a UK release on 17 May (with the band's debut single, *Slither*, scheduled for the end of April), at an exclusive listening party to let us hear the album a BMG spokesman announced this was an 'important' record. He may be right. With the dying embers of nu-metal still smoldering and the rock scene looking for a new direction, Velvet Revolver may be just what we're waiting for. *Contraband* is suffused with muscular guitar riffs and the bluesy undertones that were a Guns N' Roses staple.

But produced by Limp Bizkit and Staind technician Josh Abraham and mixed by Nirvana and Linkin Park figurehead Andy Wallace, this is much more than a record reliant on former glories – it's one that manages to infuse modernity, a hip frisson, into the Big Rock format.

Contraband echoes that raucous, running-off-the-rails style of guitar that defined Guns N' Roses, yet at the same time it has a very contemporary feel. It's like a bridge linking the old to the new. There's also a new texture in your playing – something more powerful. SLASH: "The album is pretty aggressive, which came from that thing of us all getting together. It's kind of inexplicable, but I was very passionate about it and as far as the writing was concerned, everything was very spontaneous, and it went on the record that way. By the time we picked the songs we were gonna do, there was only a couple of months before we did the album. It's all first-take stuff."

Was there a different dynamic to how you felt playing guitar behind Axl?

SLASH: "Every time you play with someone different, you get a different energy, although there was obviously an underlying familiar core for me: Duff and Matt. I love playing with different people, I always have, but at the same time there's a certain vibe I like, and I don't find it with everyone I jam with."

"Guns N' Roses was way cool when it was in its proper setting – it was killer – but then it went through a lot of crazy changes. And then Snakepit was just an outlet for me – but I didn't hone in on what makes me tick. It was just good timing, because I think everybody was trying to avoid any sort of combination of the Guns members, we just wanted to get away from that whole thing."

Now you play with Dave. What do you look for in a second guitarist?

SLASH: "In the same way that Izzy [Stradlin, GN'R second guitarist] did his own thing, so does Dave. As long as he's got his own thing together, I don't worry about what the other guy's doing and I

can concentrate on myself. It's like I had a hard time working with the guitarists in the two Snakepit bands, because those guys were so aware of what I was doing it made me self-conscious."

"Also Dave doesn't feel threatened by me telling him what to do, and vice versa. I mean, it's not like we're a two-guitar band where we do harmonies. With Izzy it was the same; very rarely did we sit down and have the patience to work out guitar parts. Instead, we just sort of improvised. Dave and Izzy are the only two guitar players I really mesh with."

Dave, how exactly did you see your role in the band?

DAVE: "I bring a lot of pedals to

"Everyone thought it was a accident waiting to happen. We've proved 'em wrong" Slash

the music, it's a kind of texture thing. Although you've got to find a balance, use them subtly. I don't want to be like, 'Hey, check me out over here, I've got all these fancy pedals.'

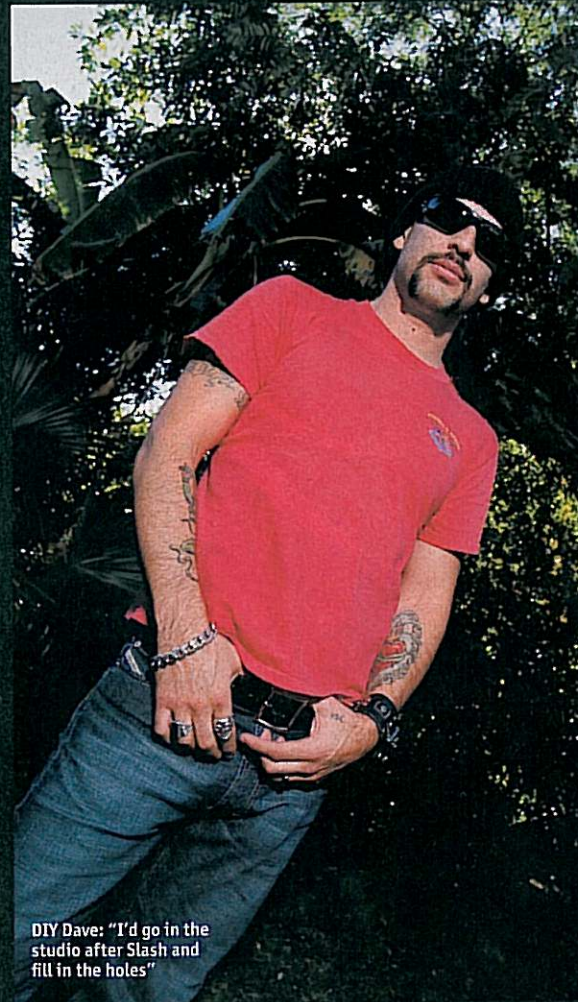
"I think the key to playing with a guitarist like Slash is knowing what he's playing and then do something completely different. Like, if he's playing open chords, I'll play barres; if he's playing a melody line, I'll play chords. We try to offset each other, so it's not like two guys in stereo. That's what was great about *Appetite For Destruction* – both guitarists played off each other, so I came in thinking like that."

Did Stone Temple Pilots have an influence on things?

SLASH: "I wasn't really aware of STP until Scott joined the band – and then



Uninhibited: "I've started using different amps, and I switched my guitars around"



DIY Dave: "I'd go in the studio after Slash and fill in the holes"

→ I didn't like to listen to them because I didn't want to be influenced. When we started working on jams, I started being more uninhibited about what sound I was going for. I usually think 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it', but that become boring. Especially when everybody around me is tripping out on this and that. Now I feel like I'm a sort of fuckin' unpacked suitcase."

You mean moving away from the classic Les Paul and Marshall combination?
SLASH: "That set-up has always been the underlying theme to my sound, but now I've started using different Fender amps. For this album I used a combination of three different Marshall

heads and the AC30, which we toggled between. In a couple instances, I'd use a Marshall head and the AC30, then a combination of two or three heads. We re-recorded one of the songs [*You Got No Right*] with my live head, which I'd never recorded with before. It's the Slash model [Signature] Marshall.

"This is the most interesting fuckin' record I've done in my career, yet it's the one I've paid the least attention to as far as gear's concerned. I even switched guitars around, which I don't normally do. My regular recording guitar is a handmade Les Paul Standard copy, which I've had since *Appetite*... There's a guy who made an amazing 1959 copy that's better than anything Gibson can

make. Unfortunately, he's no longer alive. But I have a couple of those, and they're my main guitars.

[Note: In the mid-80s, Alan Nevin, then manager of GN'R contacted friend Jim Foote, owner of the Music Works guitar shop in California, about Slash's problems finding a good sound in the studio. Foote introduced Slash to Kris Derrig, a luthier who built Les Paul replicas. The guitarist experimented with the instrument, and made it his

"This is the most interesting record I've done, yet I've paid the least attention to gear" Slash

HOW THEY DID IT...

GUITAR TECH ADAM DAY REVEALS THE GEAR BEHIND THE BAND'S SOUND

The professional reputation of Adam Day is unquestionable. He's been Slash's guitar guru for over 16 years, having previously worked with Dokken and Lynch Mob axeman, George Lynch. He knows better than anyone what the Velvet Revolver boys are picking, stomping on, and playing their guitars through, so we caught up with the guy.

For the new record, Adam cut all the instrumental pre-production demos on a Midas recording console at Lavish, singer Scott Weiland's rehearsal facility. The tracks were then transferred to a ProTools system so that Weiland could get his

lyrics together and run through his parts in the studio's control room.

Slash's main rhythm sound was achieved with a combination of three Marshall heads: his Slash Signature Series model, a regular JCM800, and a 1973 model 1987 four-input non-master volume head. This mix was then run into a Marshall 100Watt cabinet loaded with 25Watt Celestion Greenback speakers. A classic Vox AC-30 valve combo was added for some sonic variation.

Adam: "In the past we've used three or four Marshalls and blended them together to

create one voice. However, this time we tried the AC-30 in the mix."

Clean rhythm sounds on the album were created with a 1956 Gibson Les Paul plugged into the Vox, which is also fitted with Celestion Greenbacks.

In the past, Slash's amps used to be screaming in the studio. But during the recording of Guns N' Roses' *Use Your Illusion* albums, he switched to an old JCM 800 with 65/50 output, setting the preamp on 2, the master volume on 8,

and ran it through a Marshall 100Watt 4x12 cab. The result was essentially all output distortion and output gain – a

very different sound for the guitarist. This setup led to the development of a Marshall Slash signature head, based on the JCM800 model. He first used this amp with his Slash's Snakepit project.

All guitar overdubs on the Velvet Revolver record were cut directly to ProTools at Pulse, Josh Abraham's studio. The band co-produced the tracks alongside Abraham, but he took charge and worked on timing problems.

Slash was initially uneasy with the working environment at Pulse, but ultimately, the studio was set up to his liking. All cabinets were recorded with Shure SM57 mics.

Live, all the rigs are bigger and louder than ever. Slash's sound is a mix of an

Unplugged: "Electro-acoustics tend to have a synthetic sound"



main tool. The custom piece is a replica of a 1958 Les Paul with a mahogany body and neck, a top capped with flame maple, and a fretboard constructed of Brazilian rosewood. Pickups are Seymour Duncan Alnico IIs.]

"I also have a couple of other re-issues, but I didn't pull out any vintage guitars except a 1954 Les Paul. I used it for the beginning of *Fall To Pieces*, that clean guitar sound, and for the bridge in *You Got No Right*. I also used a Strat and a Telecaster for a couple sections.

"There's a song called *Sucker Train Blues* where all the rhythms are done

on a '56 Tele. I have three old Strats and I used a '65 for the solo. Although I think they're the best sounding guitars, Strats are so inconsistent and I don't have the patience to mess around with them. You just get used to playing on different necks – when you change guitar you have to adapt.

For the most part, Les Pauls are pretty easy to use. And although a Strat is real light, I just can't bang on it the way I do with a Les Paul. Strats are too fuckin' sensitive. And when they sound bad they sound horrible. That's why I tend to stick to playing Les Pauls."

DAVE: "I used a Fernandes, which I've played for 10 years. Their



incredible six Marshall heads: two Slash Signature 25/55 tops provide his distortion sound feeding two Marshall 4x12 cabs on the back line. An additional pair of signature Marshalls modified with KT 88 output valves handle his clean tones. A further head is used to power his Heil HT-1 talkbox. The cautious rocker also carries yet another Marshall Slash head as a spare.

All his cabinets are straight Marshall 1960-styled units fitted with Celestion Vintage 30 speakers. While the guitarist has experimented with different cabs and speakers, he ultimately returns to this familiar setup.

While Slash always takes to the stage with a variety of guitars, his main instrument for Revolver will be his new Gibson Signature Series Les Paul – a replica of a classic 1959 model (still considered the very best) with an aged tobacco sunburst finish.

The guitar is fitted with a Fishman Power Bridge piezo for an acoustic guitar tone – it has an onboard switch to select the piezo pickup, humbuckers or both. He will also travel with a pair of custom-made BC Rich guitars – a 10-string Bich, set up for six-strings, and his famous Guns N' Roses-era Mockingbird. He will play his Guild Crossroads double

neck guitar on stage too – a unique combination of an acoustic and an electric guitar that he helped design. Slash will perform all of his acoustic parts live on this amazing guitar.

Slash's pedals are run through the effects loop of his dirty amp and include an MXR 10-band graphic EQ and a Boss DD-5 digital delay. The latter is kicked in for soloing – the EQ provides a midrange boost to enhance feedback and to boost leads.

The only effect that Slash will operate himself onstage is a custom-made rack-mounted Dunlop Crybaby wah system. This also enables him to run up

guitar shapes are unique – mine has the thickness of a Les Paul and looks a bit like a hybrid of a Les Paul and an Iceman.

[Note: According to Mike Cassidy and Pete Skermetta from Fernandes, Kushner plays Ravelle Elite models. They're fitted with Fernandes Sustainer neck pickups and Seymour Duncan bridge units. The neck and body are mahogany and the top is a 5A Carved Canadian piece of maple. Grover tuners are fitted. Dave's newest axe sports an ivory finish, and he also has a custom metallic blue model. These are all individually built for him.]

"I used my Bogner amp [an Ecstasy 101B model. A 100Watt EL34 amp with three channels: clean, crunch, and solo sitting on two Bogner straight cabs fitted with Vintage Celestion 30s], and for some rhythm stuff I used a Mesa/Boogie Triple Rectifier with this modified Marshall head. And a shitload of pedals. Dunlop wahs: bass wahs, regular wahs, the Dimebag wah, the Rotovibe.

[Note: Slash's amp modifications were done by Mike Morin, an amp guru. The amp, an early/mid 80s Marshall JCM800 was fitted with a gain mod. Morin changed all the components, installed new tubes, tones controls, and put in a tube stage. An extra knob acts as the gain control to allow the amp to go from "brown to screaming".]

Talk us through the construction of a track. For instance, on *Slither*, do you double your rhythms to create that wall of sound?

SLASH: "No, I don't believe in using that kind of stuff. That's one thing about having two guitarists, you can do it without having to fake it."

DAVE: "When I went in the studio, Slash'd already done his rhythm parts, his solos, which was great because I could then go my own way with it, fill up the holes. In the intro, there's this wall of wah-wah and delay. I used the Line 6 Delay and right where it stops before the verse there's this trail-off and that's the Line 6 Delay. Halfway through the verses you can hear it thicken up. I used a Hyper Fuzz pedal straight into the board, not through an amp, to double my rhythms and in the breakdowns it's like a wah and delay."

to four pedals at various locations on the stage. Adam typically handles all effect and amp switching offstage, including a Heil HT-1 voice box.

Dave Kushner plays the new Fernandes Ravelle guitar through an array of effects pedals (see Dave's Set-Up, p41). All his pedals are run straight into the front of his amps – only a Hughes and Kettner Rotosphere (Leslie rotating cabinet simulator) is used through the effects loop. In the near future

Kushner hopes to use a Ground Control switching system that will allow him to use combinations of his effects with the help of a programmed footswitch.



SLASH'S SET-UP

THE ROCK LEGEND'S KILLER SET-UP

2x Marshall JCM Slash Signature series Jubilee heads [for dirty tones]; Marshall JCM Slash Signature series Jubilee head [for clean tones]; Marshall JCM Slash Signature series Jubilee head for talkbox; one Marshall JCM Slash Signature series Jubilee head as backup talkbox head; 2x JCM Slash Signature Marshall 4x12 cabinets.



Guild acoustic; BC Rich; Gibson Les Pauls. Ernie Ball strings; Dunlop Tortex picks.



Gear in rack: Peterson strobe model 590; Cry Baby; dbx 166; Yamaha SPX90.



Boss Digital Delay, MXR M-108 Ten Band Graphic EQ

DUFF'S STUFF

THE ORIGINS OF THE BASS SOUNDS



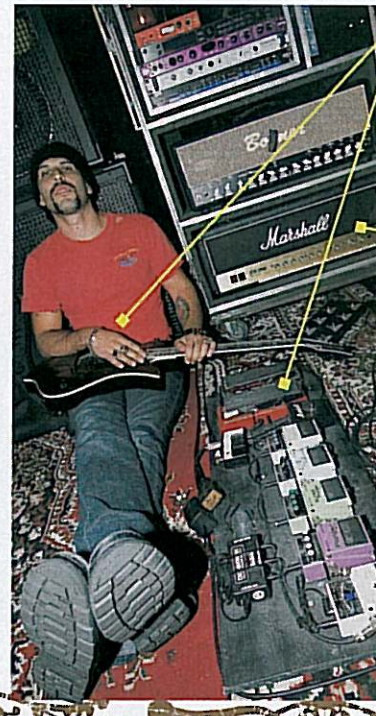
Top: Fender Aerodyne Jazz bass. Right: the white Fender Precision Special bass he used in Guns N' Roses.

2x Gallien Krueger 800 RB heads (live he will be playing through the 2001 model); GK cabinets.



KUSHNER'S KIT

DAVE SURE LIKES HIS TECHNOLOGY...



Fernandes Ravelle guitars. Pedal board: Boss Chromatic tuner TU-2; Boss Flanger BF-2; Boss Super Phaser PH-2; Boss Chorus Ensemble CE-5; Boss Digital Delay DD-3; Rotovibe pedal; Dunlop Cry Baby wah (rackmount).

Gear in rack: Line 6 Filter Pro; Dynacord CLS222; Hush II CX Noise Reduction System.

Guitar rig: Bogner head; Bogner cabinet; Marshall JCM 2000 Dual Super Lead.

Ernie Ball strings; Dunlop Tortex picks.

Additional pedals: Line 6 DL4 Delay Modeller; Line 6 DM4 Distortion Modeller; Line 6 FM4 Filter Modeller.



→ DUFF: "We're all playing the same riff in that, the verse riff. That's three fat instruments playing the same thing." SLASH: "For the most part there was a lot of quick experimenting going on. Very rarely did we pick up something and go, 'That doesn't sound right.' Usually I'd think it out first. Mostly I'm playing my Les Paul. All the heavy stuff, with the exception of *Sucker Train Blues*, is basically my Les Paul copy, a Marshall and maybe the AC30."

There are a couple of acoustic tracks on the album, aren't there?

SLASH: "Yeah, the tune *You Got No Right* is played on a Takamine [it's actually a Taylor cutaway, says guitar tech Adam Day] recorded via microphone and pickup. Just to make it sound more electric. That was the only song I wrote on acoustic. The demo we did, I cut with a Les Paul which has a Piezo pickup [see above] and it sounded really interesting. The one thing about electro-acoustics is they tend to have a very synthetic sound, so we mixed it up and made it sound more pure."

How would you compare yourself to today's rock scene?

SLASH: "None of us sit around and try to be master musicians, which is what a lot of people do. I'm into making up a really cool riff or rhythm pattern, but it's got to be in a *song* – not something you'd listen to for technical prowess. There are very few musos who I can get into for more than five minutes. Jeff Beck is one of the few guys where I can sit and listen to a whole record..."

What about the likes of, say, Linkin Park and Korn?

DUFF: "At least Linkin Park can write a chorus that sticks in your head. And Korn are cool – they started a whole thing on their own." SLASH: "I didn't used to like Korn, but I went to see them and I have to give them credit. They're one of the few new bands I've seen with attitude." DUFF: "But musically, we're a fuckin' rock band and there's no comparison between Limp Bizkit or Korn and us. We're straight-up fuckin' rock." SLASH: "I was listening to The Faces on the way over here – they're a good rock'n'roll band. Duff and I are influenced by different stuff, but it does have a common core..." DUFF: "Yeah, we could all listen to a Faces record together."

When did the music really take on a definite form?

SLASH: "When Scott joined the group. Every singer brings something different to the music. I learned a long time ago that, chances are, a good singer will come up with a better idea than me, unless I want a really strong melody to come across."

"There's an interesting chord change on the song *You Got No Right*, and it sounded really simplistic but really interesting when I first wrote it. Then we gave it to Scott to play with – and he wrote this amazing vocal for it. I wouldn't have come up with anything like that. That's one of the great things about being in a band – we all come to this with our own ideas."

Did you know you wanted Matt and Duff beside you as a rhythm section?

SLASH: "No, this project came out of nowhere. At the beginning I was starting

a band with Steve Gorman, the drummer from the Black Crowes, and a bass player when Randy [Castillo] died. Then Matt asked if I wanted to jam at the benefit for Randy's family. Everybody had their own things going on, but everybody just dropped what they were doing, Duff rented a house out here in LA and we just focused on it."

Duff has spoken about an intangible connection between the three of you. How would you describe it?

SLASH: "Duff's always been a real unique, great sounding bass player. And the first time I saw Matt I knew we had to get him into GN'R. He caught my ear as one of the most amazing drummers I'd ever heard."

"Before this, me, Duff and Matt hadn't been in a room together in six years, and we'd forgotten how well it works. I think

"We're straight-up fuckin' rock! You just can't compare us to today's bands" Duff

Axl really took it for granted how great the four of us – including Izzy – worked together, because it was hard for him to replace us. When the three of us walked into the rehearsal studio, we all had a real feeling about it. All of a sudden I didn't feel like your regular Joe fuckin' off the street guitar player. And as soon as we all started playing, there was a real powerful vibe going."

Conceivably, if Guns had stayed together and kept that original feeling from the early days, do you think this an album they could have made?

SLASH: "I got so disillusioned with Guns that I even stopped being able to write for the band. That was in '95 when I started doing Snakepit. I remember Axl threatening to sue me because he thought that material should have been for GN'R. I just didn't see Guns doing it so I slapped it all together for a solo record. But, the stuff we're doing now, I've asked myself, 'I wonder if Axl thinks this should have been his?' But when this comes out it's gonna be a lot better and sound more together than he was probably hoping it would be."

Another new element on the album is the fact you recorded first, then Dave played his parts. With Guns, Izzy would lay his rhythm tracks, then you'd follow. Any reason for the change?

SLASH: "It's really no big deal. Dave asked to go in after me, and I said yeah. In Guns, I'd do my scratch [guide] tracks with Izzy, and we'd keep Izzy's takes, because they were about as involved as he'd get. We tried to use some of Dave's scratch tracks, but for the most part I just listened to myself, the drums and bass, which left a pretty good template

for Dave. I try harder when I'm by myself. I came back to hear exactly how that influenced him and if all of a sudden it made my stuff seem too sparse or naked, but it worked out great."

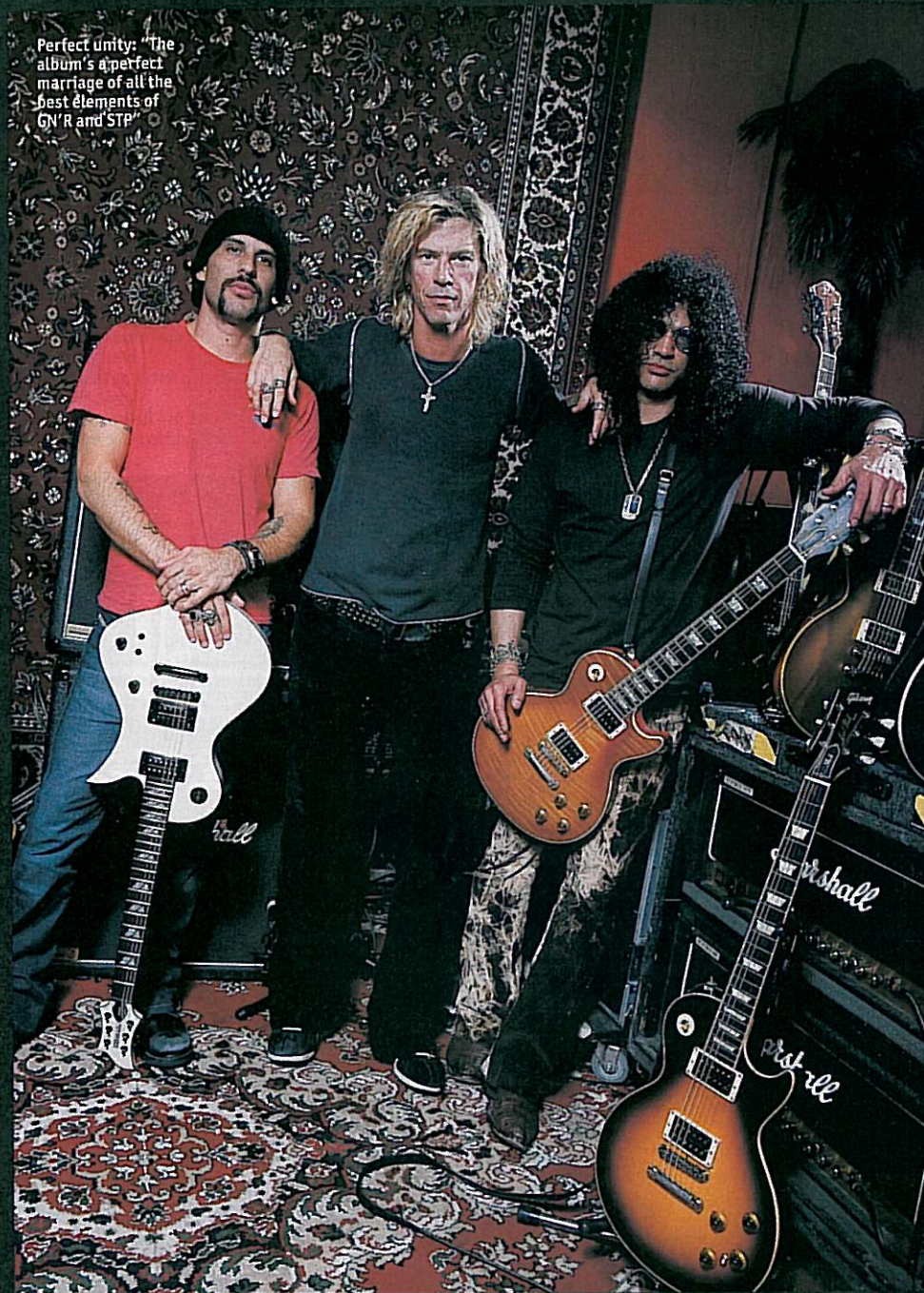
But your solos were put on after everything else was recorded?

SLASH: "No, I usually put the solos down before the vocal is recorded. When we did *Appetite*... I didn't have much experience, but I kinda had it mapped out how each part would sound. I'd put my [rhythm] guitars down, then →



For a full interview with Duff, see the next TG Bass Special

Perfect unity: "The album's a perfect marriage of all the best elements of GN'R and STP."



→ the harmony, then the solos. We did it like that, because back then Axl hardly sang at rehearsal, we had to play as a band without vocals. When Axl finally put the vocals on, we really didn't know how the songs were gonna turn out. We knew how the song sounded live and that was it. At that point, we'd rehearse really hard to make sure we knew the material without vocals, so we didn't use that as a crutch.

"But it's nice to have vocals to work with, so now we try to get Scott to do scratch vocals, I do the solo, then the real vocals come on afterwards."

Do you have a good idea of what the solo will be before entering the studio?

SLASH: "This record was a little different in that respect, because we wrote the material so quickly. When it came to solos, there's either something melodic singing in my head right away

"This is the first time I've had a real feeling of being part of a band..." Slash

or on the first run at the solo, then I'll go back and see if it works. *Sucker Train Blues* has a one-take whammy bar solo. There are a few songs on this record that don't have any real planned solo. Sometimes I'll play a song through enough times I feel the same exact thing every time I get to the solo section. But I never actually went out and played it live, so I had to do a lot of improvising."

The solo on Spectacle?

SLASH: "That was definitely made up on the spot! In fact, that was the first song we recorded guitars on. I went to Josh's [Abraham, producer] studio and played in the control room – I

hate doing overdubs, so I stand in the control room with huge speakers, crank it up and play like I'm in a live situation. When I got there he had these two little Yamahas [monitors] and that was it. I mean, how can you recreate a rock and roll environment with just these little NS-10s? We had the NS-10s cranked up as far as they'd go, and I'd brought in a tiny Fender and a distortion box, and we did the solo. That was leftfield for me." DAVE: "I've worked with Josh since he first started producing, and he has some great ideas. I did a demo with him ages ago with the guys from Orgy, we were in a band together before Orgy [Lit, which later turned into the Lit of *My Own Worst Enemy* fame]. He's a guitar player too, he understands it all. He gets rock and the modern thing like with Orgy. He gets the balance."

What about Superhuman? That opening riff sounds similar to your phrase on Sweet Child O' Mine, but twisted, on acid.

SLASH: "That's cool, it just came out of nowhere. I think the *Sweet Child O' Mine* influence pops up because it's a single-note style of mine, especially when I do this octave thing around a melody. I have to give Axl credit, because if he hadn't recognised it as being great, I wouldn't have used it, I thought it was a joke. It was just me doing a lick with chord changes underneath to gave it some movement. Then Axl came in and started singing it. I hated that song until after '88 or '89. We were touring with Aerosmith, and it was such a huge hit you couldn't ignore it."

Now that it's all done and the record is ready to be released, is Contraband the album you wanted to make?

SLASH: "This is the first time I've had a real feeling of being in a band. I had such a blast, and I learned a lot, we're all real comfortable with each other. With us, we're all just so in sync, and there's no real arguing or ego problems. And the ideas just come like that [snaps fingers], we just have a certain kind of energy. So I'm real excited about the record. When I hear the album I find it really compelling, it really makes me want to listen to it."

"I'm just happy we got to do our thing, and do it the way we wanted to. The cool thing about this band is we put it all together, we went through all the fuckin' bullshit, we had no fuckin' support from the very beginning. Everybody thought it was a complete fucking failure waiting to happen. Now we've done it, it's a huge feeling of accomplishment, it reminds me of the old days."

DAVE: "This did end up being a perfect marriage of all the best elements of the Appetite-era Guns N' Roses, early Stone Temple Pilots. I was comfortable with those guys coming in with what they do. We didn't play it safe."

SLASH: "The album just sounds so original, so finished, like a real band and a real record. It's just like, 'Wow', you know? I'm blown away by it." ■

LEARN TO PLAY

VELVET REVOLVER & SLASH'S SNAKEPIT

SET ME FREE/DOIN' FINE

NOW'S THE CHANCE FOR YOU TO LEARN VELVET REVOLVER'S NEW SONG AND A STONKING RIFF FROM SLASH'S SNAKEPIT!

'SET ME FREE'

WORDS AND MUSIC BY VELVET REVOLVER

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'DOIN' FINE'

WORDS AND MUSIC BY SLASH/SORUM/DOVER/INEZ

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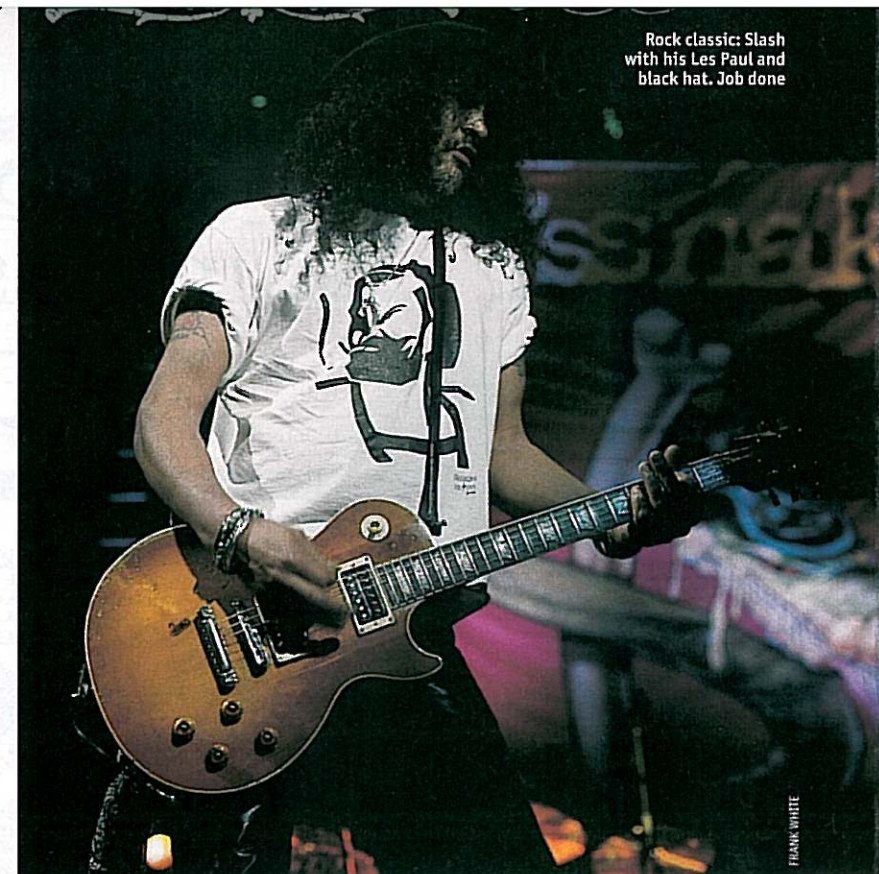
To demonstrate the full extent of Slash's stirring guitar work, we're presenting two songs.

The first is *Set Me Free* (tabbed in full) from Slash's new super group, Velvet Revolver, which brings together three former members of Guns N' Roses, Scott Weiland from the Stone Temple Pilots and guitarist Dave Kushner (ex-Wasted Youth). The second tune, *Doin' Time*, is a stonking riff from the man's former band, Slash's Snakepit, and we've tabbed this song's intro and main riff.

It's no surprise that Slash is very enthusiastic about being in Velvet Revolver: "We are like a bunch of kids who've just learned how to play the same chord together. We're thrilled, like 'Hey, we wrote a song! Hey, we played a gig!' Maybe that's why this project has worked so well – because we're actually the exact opposite of being jaded."

While Velvet Revolver's 2004 release *Contraband* inevitably offers a few echoes of its members' illustrious pasts, their sound is more aggressive and contemporary. Bassist Duff elaborates: "There's always that 'Fuck you' element to it. We can't play nice or play radio-friendly. Slash, Matt and I were always that way in Guns N' Roses, and Scott and Dave are very like-minded. We really hope to bring some chaos back into the whole world of rock."

Set Me Free was originally written for the soundtrack to the film *The Hulk* (2003) and fuses Slash and Kushner's



Rock classic: Slash with his Les Paul and black hat. Job done

AMP SETTINGS – SET ME FREE/DOIN' FINE



Slash's sound has a specific type of distortion, focused on a biting mid-range courtesy of his Les Paul's bridge humbucker and Marshall amps. The top amp front relates to *Set Me Free*, with a slightly biased treble EQ setting. In subtle contrast, the bottom amp is relevant to *Doin' Fine* and has a more pronounced treble boost, which enables his riffing to cut through the band's sound.

guitar lines beautifully. Technically, the track shouldn't pose too much of a problem, but it's important that it's played with the right amount of aggression and attitude. The solo will invariably need most attention. It has more of a composed feel to it (mainly because a second guitar doubles the first

an octave below) than most of Slash's solos, but nevertheless contains many classy pentatonic based licks, bends and double-stops, and a high 22nd fret bend to bring it to a close. Although we haven't tabbed the track's ending, it's a straightforward chord progression using F5 and B♭5 chords. **STEVE ALLSWORTH**

VELVET REVOLVER: Set Me Free – intro

TRACK 5



ON THE CD - GUITARS & BACKING: STEVE ALLSWORTH

The first finger needs to flatten slightly, resting over the second string to mute it so the octaves are cleanly sounded. Use downstrokes throughout.

BACKING – TRACK 6